

Children's Liturgy guide

Second Sunday of Lent (Year A)

Gospel: Matthew 17:1-9

The Transfiguration in Matthew chapter 17 can be a difficult bit of Scripture to understand. With faces shining like the sun, Moses and Elijah returning to be with Jesus, and an audible voice from heaven, you would be forgiven for thinking you were dreaming if you had witnessed this!

But this encounter with Peter, James and John did happen and it was hugely significant – then and now.

Moses, who received God's law (The Ten Commandments), Elijah (a Prophet), and Jesus (our Lord), are all in one place. What an image to behold! What this experience teaches is God's succession plan:

- There was a time in the Old Testament where people would bring their offerings to God as a sacrifice. They would 'pay the price' for their wrongdoing (sin) against the law. Therefore, Moses is present.
- What followed is a time when God would use Prophets (people who had been given a message by God) to tell people to stop doing wrong and turn to God. Therefore, Elijah is present.
- And Jesus was present because the next bit of God's plan to help his people was, of course, the sacrifice on the Cross bringing forgiveness of sins. God himself confirms it with a voice from heaven: 'This is my Son. With Him I am well pleased. Listen to Him.'

What is striking is also how different Jesus is physically in the presence of God. His face shines like the sun.

Sharing Scripture – Matthew 17:1-9

Read Matthew 17:1-9 to the children and explain the significance of Moses and Elijah being with Jesus (from the notes above).

Ask the children to share times in their lives when they have been surprised or shocked by what they have seen. Make the connection to how they felt to what Peter, James and John were feeling at the Transfiguration. It's okay to let the children know that this was a very strange thing that was happening. This was not normal, but it was very special.

Ask a second question – What makes them feel good? Who are they with when they feel their best? Take some answers and connect their answers to the fact that Jesus' face shone like the sun because He was in the presence of God the Father. He was different because He was in the very presence of the Father.

When we are close to God (in His presence), we change, and we can live in a way that God wants us to live.

Respond

Take a large piece of paper or white board and ask the children to write down ways that they think they can be closer to God. Expect answers such as 'praying', 'going to Mass', 'singing to God', 'helping others'. Without putting pressure on the children, encourage them to take time this week, and this Lent, to be close to God.

Close in Prayer

Loving Father, we thank you for Jesus and how He completed your plan from Moses and then to Elijah and the other prophets. Just like when the face of Jesus shone in your presence, help us all to shine for you to others around us. Amen.

How can I be closer to God?

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